# Library Strategy, 2013-15

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# **Foreword:**

What we read can shape our experience of the world around us, intensify it, deepen it, and give added richness to it. This is true whether applied to the emotional complexity of the novel adding to our empathy for those around us, the descriptive pattern of poetry refining our sensory experiences, or the contents of the wealth of non-fiction sources of information about the world around us, which shape our understanding and form our opinions.

This is why the public library service is the lynchpin of every community, the service which both enables us to live fuller, more satisfying lives as individuals in no end of ways, and also allows us to act in a more informed way and with greater empathy as a community.

"They laughed long, freely and contentedly. Their laughter was so tasty that it made the old lady throw back her head and rasp quietly; The old man's shoulders shook with it and he twitched the ends of his moustache. Their granddaughter was laughing too, she wasn't entirely sure why she was laughing but she was caught up in their laughter."

Elena Katishonok, 2011 'Once Upon a Time There Was an Old Man and Old Woman'

Whether it is in providing material to read for pleasure in all the panoply of different media in which the written word can be disseminated nowadays, or in ensuring that we have access to reliable, well-researched and verified reference material in our age of limitless access to information (not all of which is reliable) via the web, the public library service is the greatest force for self improvement, and our collective improvement as a society in the modern world.

It has lost none of the potency which early campaigners for public libraries imbued it with in the mid-nineteenth century, indeed if anything it has added to it, its activities now making it the key vehicle for the early years development of children, and support for parents and carers, developing literacy and empathy from the earliest stages of a child's life. It offers the community the information and sources of reliable opinions which a modern-day democracy needs if its citizens are to thrive and prosper, it is the vital bulwark against isolation and loneliness in old age, the key to a knowledgeable and thriving work force and economy, the best way to tackle socially-damaging polarisation within society between those with access to new technology and the skills to use it and those shut out from them, and it is the surest way to guarantee our health as a community, to provide effectively the means by which we can enjoys active minds and information about how to maintain physical health and activity.

But, most of all, the services that it offers bring pleasure to thousands.

Like laughter, public libraries bring joy and much more to all of us, so it is an enormous pleasure to introduce the borough's new Library Strategy.

# Cllr. Andrew Curtin

**Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns and Communities** 

# About the Library Strategy

Reflecting that of the Culture Strategy, our Library Strategy is driven by the very simple **ambition**:

# "To transform lives through participation in, and enjoyment of, reading and a wide range of Library services"

The **purpose** of the Library Strategy is to:

'Provide focus and added value to the efforts of everyone involved in the planning and provision of Library services, linked to a very clear view of what will be achieved by 2015'.

The **Objectives and Principles** of our strategy are also based on those of the Culture Strategy:

OBJECTIVE 1: Health and Wellbeing Support a high standard of mental, physical and emotional health for all by increasing engagement with the Library service and develop initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles, reduce social isolation and increase wellbeing.	OBJECTIVE 2: Learning and Development Support learning outcomes and personal development for all ages through our innovative library service, delivering informal learning opportunities, developing literacy and enhancing our digital offer.		OBJECTIVE 3: Towns and Communities Enriching our local towns and communities through continued investment and increased engagement in Libraries, as focal points for our communities.
<b>PRINCIPLE 1: Community Empowerment</b> Promote more active engagement in service delivery, from consultation, to volunteering, to devolving services to the local community.		<b>PRINCIPLE 2: Work in Partnership</b> Continue to work with our partners, internal and external, and regionally across borough boundaries, to achieve shared objectives.	
<b>PRINCIPLE 3: Inclusion &amp; Cohesion</b> Be smarter about collecting information on our customers and communities. Target new audiences and broaden access to our services, breaking down barriers to engagement where these exist, facilitating social progress and improved quality of life.		Continue to develop service delivery, ther services against a ba	d Value Services innovative, modern and efficient methods of reby maintaining the high quality of our ackdrop of reduced budgets, and ensuring aluated effectively to retain a focus on eople.

# 2.1 The intrinsic and instrumental value of Libraries

The **intrinsic benefits** of reading are both obvious and unique to every reader. Some people read for the mental challenge and purpose of personal development; to learn new skills, develop their knowledge, and discover information. Some read for the entertainment value; for the drama and suspense of a good story, or for the pleasures of escaping reality and becoming immersed in another world. Some read for the personal enrichment it gives them; for relaxing the mind, inspiring their imagination and creativity, even finding spiritual enrichment or expanding their worldview.

The **instrumental benefits** of reading logically follow from these intrinsic benefits. For example, reading improves health and wellbeing through reducing stress, lowering blood pressure and improving mood. Research shows that reading can reduce stress levels by 67% (University of Sussex), and social activities based on reading (e.g. reading groups and author events) help to combat isolation by bringing people together.

Some research even suggests that reading may reduce the onset of dementia, with one piece of research suggesting reducing the likelihood by 35% (New Eng. Jnl Medicine) although this is not conclusive. It is particularly interesting however given the ageing population and predictions that levels of dementia could rise by 61% by 2026 (Kings Fund).

However, Libraries are more than a book lending service. Our vision for public libraries in the 21st century sees them providing access to information, learning and cultural content in shared and trusted spaces; inspiring and empowering people to lead active lives, enriched through cultural experience. As such, public libraries have a much greater intrinsic and instrumental benefit than reading alone. For example:

- Increased social interaction Libraries offer excellent spaces for people to come together to attend groups, activities or talks. As well as improving personal emotional health, such activities aid social inclusion and community cohesion.
- Bridging the digital divide the provision of free PC access in our libraries ensures that people who do not have access to equipment / internet at home are not disadvantaged. Our Libraries provide a free IT Basic Skills course which helps people back into work and improves their life outcomes.
- Improving literacy and pleasure in reading
- Improving knowledge, skills and qualifications
- Increased community involvement
- Increased self confidence and self esteem for individuals
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Widening access to cultural opportunities
- Providing information and promoting the borough



- Access to historical resources through the Local Studies and Family History Centre.
- Providing access to government benefits through the free Peoples Network computers, ensuring people on low incomes with no access technology are not disadvantaged
- Providing a trusted first point of contact and access to information about Council services
- Helping to promote financial inclusion through the provision of information and IT support

# 2.2 The value of Libraries to residents

- Our library buildings are important as local hubs, for local people to find out information, learn new skills or read for pleasure. The effective access to library services for local communities is of paramount importance, and our new 11<sup>th</sup> 'virtual library' will deliver to an even wider audience.
- The 2011 'Your Council, Your Say' survey stated that 82% of people were either satisfied or very satisfied with Havering Library Services. This is backed up by results from our own 2010 Culture and Leisure survey which found that 89% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with Libraries, 71% were satisfied or very satisfied with our buildings, 61% were either satisfied or very satisfied with our book selection and 50% were either satisfied or very satisfied with our computers.
- In the 2010 Culture & Leisure Survey 73% of people either agreed or strongly agreed that Libraries were 'an important part of the community', 58% thought they gave young people 'places to go and things to do', and 21% said that their visit on that day had helped them develop or learn a new skill.
- Library buildings remain a key asset for the local community; they provide a welcoming space for local groups, schools, community organisations and individuals. Providing book stock will remain a key component of the service during the life of this strategy and this needs to be provided in buildings that are comfortable and welcoming. Our buildings need to provide access to people with disabilities and the service will need to provide well trained staff to support customers who may not be IT literate, or be able to afford computer access at home. There is also a need for study space for people undertake research and do homework / course related studies across the borough. We will continue to run a full events programme from our buildings, however with increasing pressure on budgets we will look at opportunities for co-location with other services to ensure we are able to maintain our current service.

Although we already receive very high levels of satisfaction from our residents, we are always looking to improve on our services and actively seek feedback from users and non-users. One way we do this is through our Annual Market Research Survey. The most recent survey produced in the following recommendations and resulting actions. This survey will continue to run annually and will inform our future plans

Feedback from Users	Action taken
A wider choice of books was important	We have purchased Evidence Based Stock Management systems to measure how hard stock works. This has helped ensure we have the right stock in the right place, and created significant efficiencies.
	New Stock contracts, which are managed by supplier selection criteria, are now in place and are improving the range and volume of stock.
Maintaining a welcoming feel is also important	We have tried to create a brand in all of our libraries to ensure people recognise they are in a Havering Library and it is warm and welcoming for all.
Increased publicity of 'library events' outside of the library may help to increase numbers of people utilising such services	We have moved into Social Networking (particularly Twitter and Facebook) and have our own TV network. We have made films of our services and we are moving into e-mail marketing this year.
Computers seen as old and slow	New computers have been purchased for all branches and the network has been increased from 2mg to 10mg

Feedback from Non Users	Action taken
An improvement in access and publicity around increased access in cultural and leisure services may encourage people who have mobility issues. An inclusive ethos at activities / events may increase the number attendances from people who consider themselves to have a disability.	We have made a short film around libraries and the services we provide for people with disabilities which is used by our Outreach Team to promote the service to disability groups. We also held our first disability forum this year, which seeks to develop an ongoing dialogue with users and representative partners in order to continue to review and improve our service for this audience.

# 2.3 The value of Libraries to Living Ambition

The Library service makes a significant contribution to the Council's Living Ambition.

Environment	Libraries contribute to the environment by ensuring that all new refurbishments meet the highest standards including gaining BREEAM 'very good' status where possible. Elm Park Library was our first new library building and was built using sustainable wood, has a sedum roof, recyclable materials used for insulation, and has photovoltaic panels on the roof which save on utility costs for the building. Elm Park was the first 'Green' library in London.
	The library service continually focuses on the environment; we run courses for children using recycled materials, donate our old newspapers to the local animal shelter, recycle all old books, support campaigns such as 'love food, hate waste', distribute orange and green sacks to the community, and proactively promote recycling to residents.
	Libraries provide resources that help people learn about, and shape their perception of, their local environment, as well as a Local Studies and Family History Centre which helps people understand their historic environment. Library buildings are in prominent locations in the heart of Havering's town centres, and have a positive impact on people's perceptions of their local area.
Learning	Enquiring about ourselves, our possibilities, and the world and people around us is essential to a successful education and personal development, as well as simply for enjoyment.
	Through our 10 branch libraries and our new virtual library we are the focus of enquiries for the local community. Libraries encourage learning as a lifelong activity, enabling individuals to achieve their potential, through new knowledge, abilities, interests, and increased confidence. Libraries serve a vital function in providing universal access to information and literacy development, offer a wide range of courses and activities, provide space and resources for research, homework and study, and importantly provide a neutral place for learning outside of the school and home environment.
	We have a Schools Library Service which provides advice and support to a number of schools within the borough. The service assists with setting up school libraries, the provision of appropriate resources, and runs courses for continuous professional development of schools staff.
	The Reader Development Team visit all schools and pre-schools in the borough to promote libraries and literacy. They also run training sessions for school staff, pupils and library customers on the library's online resource offer.
	Libraries run the Reading Buddies volunteer programme which involves volunteers supporting children who are having issues with reading and literacy. The programme has been successful in raising reading achievements of children participating. We are also introducing this for adult readers with low levels of literacy for the first time this year.
	This year we have invested in a wide range of online services to attract different audiences and promote learning in a digital age, these include online language classes and 'Universal Class' which offers over 400 non accredited, self-paced, tutor-

	supported courses across a wide range of subject areas.
Towns and Communities	Libraries sit at the heart of their communities, both in a figurative and literal sense. We have 10 branch libraries across the borough in each of the main town centres. Nine of these have either been refurbished or rebuilt and there are plans in place to replace the 10 <sup>th</sup> building at Harold Hill by end 2014. We will also be rebuilding an existing new library in Rainham in 2014. Both new buildings will have additional meeting room space for more local community activities, they will have an increase book stock and more public network computers available.
	Libraries attract footfall into town centres, act as focal points for communities and community involvement and, through good design, contribute to the visual appeal of our towns and communities.
	Libraries provide a focal point for culture in every community, they provide access to information and advice to help residents play a well informed and clearly articulated part in life and in their local community. They are also focal points for creativity in the community, through new media, book stock, information and support as well as a wide range of informal learning, cultural and engaging events (in excess of 200 events per month). They provide a safe, neutral space for our communities to meet and socialise, and to seek advice and information from partner agencies such as Age Concern, PASC and CAB. All libraries are accessible to people with disabilities
	The role of the library staff within communities has grown to include being seen as key players in community events. The staff and buildings have a support role in large community actives for example Collier Row Parade and Fun Day and the Elm Park Fiesta. The Reader Development Team also attends the Havering Show, International Women's Day, Homes in Havering Residents Day, and other civic and community events.
	The library service produces a quarterly events programme and a monthly e newsletter to ensure we market our services to the widest audience.
Individuals	Libraries, like all forms of culture, have the unique ability to change lifestyles and behaviour and truly transform people's lives. Active engagement has been repeatedly shown to have a positive impact on individual health and wellbeing and life satisfaction. Libraries offer individuals the opportunity to socialise within the community particularly when they have experienced a change in their life circumstances or are socially isolated.
	Libraries provide opportunities for individuals to improve their employment prospects by providing access to reading, training, research, and volunteering opportunities. In turn this improves the economic potential for individuals, families and communities. The Libraries offer free access to computers and the internet, and provide basic training and volunteer support to help improve residents' computer skills. This vital service helps to uphold social and financial inclusion amongst those who wouldn't otherwise have access, something that will become increasingly vital as more services go online (for e.g. the introduction of universal credit which will require application for benefits online) and face-to-face contact is reduced as part of the Council's Customer Service strategy.
	Our libraries have a good understanding of their local communities and provide a wide range of events and activities to match

	local need and meet the needs and interests of all sections of the community. For example, Libraries deliver a range of services for disabled people, including software on PCs in each library which meet the RNIB 6 steps programme, and story times for people with disabilities through a range of different materials including 'Bag Books' which help develop concentration for people with learning disabilities. Specially trained staff work with schools, residential homes and community groups for adults to deliver a programme of Bag Book Story sessions, and Ravensbourne School pupils will be participating in the Summer Reading Challenge for the second year using Bag Books. Parents of Autistic Children Together (PACT) have worked with staff to deliver Autism awareness training. This has helped staff to recognised customers who may have autism and it has helped them to communicate more effectively and provide a better service. Young people from the support group have since visited Romford Library on two occasions to meet staff informally and find out more about libraries. Young people from the group partially like the RFID machines as this enables them to use our service independently. The staff have also all completed Safeguarding training.
	We have several opportunities for volunteering in our libraries, and as a result of customer feed back have increased the number of IT volunteer support hours available at al branches. We are working in partnership with HAVCO to deliver further opportunities and have recently opened a Volunteer Information Desk at Romford Central Library in partnership with them.
Value	Libraries have one of the highest resident satisfaction levels within the Council, and Havering Libraries cost per visit is the 2 <sup>nd</sup> lowest in London (CIPFA data). Yet we are always seeking new ways to improve value for our residents, exploring new ways to deliver services and achieve greater efficiencies, securing external funding where possible, and working in partnership with the public, private and voluntary & community sector to offer an even greater range of services.
	The London Library Consortium (LLC) is one such example of how Havering has led the way of securing efficiencies and improving services. The enables our residents to have access to 7 million book items and have the use of over 170 branch libraries across London whist reducing our own costs. Libraries are also looking at opportunities to maximise the use of space available to increase income. This has already been achieved in the new Central Library where unused parts of the building have been converted into council office space. This has allowed for efficiency savings whilst not impacting on frontline services.



# 2.4 How Libraries contribute to Health and Wellbeing

'Five Ways to Wellbeing' (commissioned by the Foresight Project) describes the kind of behaviour people can undertake which will lead to improvements in their mental health and wellbeing. In the table below we outline how Libraries provide opportunities for each of these identified behaviours and activities.

Positive behaviour and activity:	How Libraries provide opportunities for this:
1. <b>Connect</b> With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community.	<ul> <li>Numerous courses and events available to encourage residents to connect with fellow residents.</li> <li>Many of our customers are of an older generation who use the library as an opportunity to socialise. I.e. through Knit and Natter clubs.</li> <li>There are also a lot of opportunities for parents, children and whole families to bond through groups such as Read &amp; Rhyme.</li> <li>New media options have meant that our Facebook and Twitter pages provide spaces where people can connect and share like minded discussions about books and culture in the borough.</li> <li>The libraries TV Network has provided people with access to what happens at our events and has given people the confidence to connect with local groups which helps to reduce social isolation and depression.</li> </ul>
2. <b>Be active</b> Discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.	<ul> <li>The Library service now runs Zumba classes in Romford Central Library. We are also running Summer Sports Parties in all libraries this summer, and hold fitness road shows. We promote health and fitness in a range of settings, including Sports Centres.</li> <li>We hold an extensive range of book stock and online magazines on a wide variety of sporting activities and Health and Wellbeing.</li> <li>We hold Baby Bounce and Wiggle and Giggle session for pre school children to link music and movement.</li> <li>Observations contained in written form and in a variety of genres and media, sharpens our perception of the world and our ability to take notice.</li> </ul>

3. <b>Take notice</b> Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling.	Libraries are the perfect setting to instil and cultivate curiosity, through access to a range of resources in various forms. Libraries worked in partnership with the 'Year of Living Gratefully' project. We run regular Poetry and Creative Writing Groups and we are working on the Arts Award Discover this year which will encourage young people to notice arts and culture in their day to day life.
4. <b>Keep learning</b> Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident.	<ul> <li>Whether for pleasure or personal and professional development, libraries provide a valuable place for learning new skills and developing knowledge. Our libraries regularly hold temporary exhibitions and talks, offer a range of courses, and provide free and easy access to information.</li> <li>We run 18 Reading Groups which encourage people to be able to read and analyse books in a sociable group setting.</li> <li>Libraries offer a wide range of online resources which include access to Dictionaries, Art and Music, Encyclopaedias, Study and Homework, Family and Local History, Legal and Business Support.</li> <li>Libraries also offer online access to a range of Newspapers and Magazines, and have recently launched 'Universal Class' an online learning resource with hundreds of self-paced, tutor-led courses.</li> </ul>
5. <b>Give</b> Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, as linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.	Our library service is supported by a very strong base of volunteers. We have in excess of 200 regular volunteers who support the Summer Reading Challenge, the Housebound Service, the Reading Buddies Programme, peer support for the internet and Local History. This year also saw the introduction of the Library Ambassador programme.

Libraries can, and do, make a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing agenda. The central role of libraries, reading and information sources and its contribution to health and well being is recognised in the work of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, in our Culture Strategy, and by partners in the Health Service and other relevant bodies. This provides us with excellent grounds in Havering to ensure maximum levels of health and wellbeing among residents by using the work of the public library service in the borough.

### **Promoting Healthy Lifestyles**

Libraries have a Health and Wellbeing corner in every branch. These include books on mood boosting, diet, exercise, medical issues, mental health issues, emotional health support, and more. We also hold leaflets from a range of services and will be holding sessions in partnership with NHS and other providers to promote health and wellbeing. Libraries also often partner with other organisations to offer space for the delivery of health activities such as healthy eating advice, smoking cessation and blood pressure checks, and offer Books on Prescription (selfhelp books referred by their GP).

# Supporting Early Years Development

The Frank Field Review in 2010 examined the nature and extent of poverty in the UK and presented recommendations for increasing the life chances of children which the report argues is the best way to tackle intergenerational disadvantage. The report proposes nine 'life chance indicators which cover things like behavioural, social and emotional development, cognitive development, home learning environment, and maternal mental health.

Libraries are important partners in supporting early years development, we work closely with health visitors and children's centres in a number of ways, for example at Upminster we provide space for Health Visitors to do progress checks, and our Book Start programme is distributed in partnership with Health Visitors and Community Nursery Nurses. Our Book Start programme and events such as Baby Bounce and Read and

Rhyme have proven very valuable in supporting both children and parents. Libraries provide opportunities for play and all the benefits that come from this, i.e. cognitive, behavioural, physical and social development, stimulating enguiry and problem-solving, and developing emotional engagement between parents and children. Libraries provide opportunities for learning, particularly early communication and literacy, and also provide opportunities for parents to socialise and build support networks.

### Combating social isolation and ensuring services are accessible to all

Libraries make a significant contribution to combating social isolation. We run our Housebound Service to support older people and people with particular disabilities which mean they can not leave their homes. We run Baby Bounce and Wiggle and Giggle to encourage social interaction between young mums and babies. These sessions also help provide a neutral space for mums to share experiences and build confidence. We also run Young at Heart groups which give older people opportunities to socialise and keep mentally and physically active.

Libraries also work closely with Customers with Special Needs and Caring Organisations to make our services more accessible, and we have worked in partnership with PACT (Parents of Autistic Children and Teenagers) to deliver Autism awareness training to our staff. We run specialist Bag Book sessions in special needs schools and adult groups, we run the Summer Reading Challenge at Ravensbourne School, and we regularly take our services to other special needs schools and First Steps Special Needs Playgroup. We also work with MIND to deliver the 6 Book Challenge and hold Dementia Roadshows in our branches.



# 2.5 How Libraries contribute to Learning and Personal Development

#### Literacy

Public libraries serve an important function in the literacy development, which in turn has a major impact on quality of life. Poor literacy skills are part of a vicious cycle of factors that lead to disadvantage and poverty of opportunity. Research shows the links between low literacy and crime, poor health choices, low educational attainment and unemployment<sup>i</sup>.

Recent reviews of child poverty<sup>ii</sup> and the Early Years Foundation Stage<sup>iii</sup> have identified early language and literacy as building blocks for children's lives, helping to narrow the gap in the life chances experienced by children from poorer homes.

The development of literacy and reading form the core of the public library offer, and visiting libraries and library activities are generally viewed as enjoyable recreational activities by children and young people. This is important as both children's reading attainment and their enjoyment of reading has declined in recent years, yet research studies have shown positive links between enjoyment, learning and academic success<sup>iv</sup>.

### **Digital Access**

Public libraries have a vital role in bridging the digital divide and enabling people to get reliable information from the internet. Not everyone has broadband access, let alone internet access, and many are lack the skills or confidence to use the internet. It is also more often those of an older generation or poorer background who do not have access.

By providing free access to the internet, and providing free and non-intimidating basic IT skills training, libraries help to prevent people being excluded from access to useful online resources and services.

### Hosting training and development

Libraries can provide even more opportunities for local people by being a 'host' for training and development, by partnering with organisations who are specialist in other areas to help people gain skills, become more employable, and build their confidence.

We already work with a number of agencies such as Learn Direct and The Sure Trust to deliver such courses in our branches.





#### **Informal Learning**

Libraries provide a safe and welcoming space for community groups or individuals to learn, explore, improve their skills and socialise. We provide a huge range of informal learning courses, including basic IT skills training, arts and crafts classes, poetry groups, Creative Writing groups, we 18 Reading Groups, we also have over 400 on line courses which range from Cookery, Computer skills, Photography to CV writing, History, Finance and Health and medicine etc. We also have 80 foreign language courses which range from Albanian to Zulu. We also have 20 courses which cover English as a second language.

The Library Service is working in partnership with a number of learning providers as part of a new Community Learning Strategy. The strategy is built around 5 development themes which together aim to improve the provision of informal community learning in the borough by identifying opportunities for integration, partnership working and efficiencies between the main providers.

The 5 development themes within the Community Learning Strategy are:

- 1) A continuing focus on partnerships and networks
- 2) Forging greater service integration
- 3) Becoming even more user/citizen led
- 4) Designing and delivering 'a new curriculum for challenging times'
- 5) Giving priority to services that 'add value'



# **3.1 What services do we provide?**

The Library Service is responsible for the management and development of:

- 10 physical branch libraries with each branch having an extensive physical book stock, free PC access for customers and free Wi-Fi access, and each running a range of events and activities which are tailored to the local community.
- 1 Virtual Library providing 24/7 access to a wide range of on line materials including dictionaries, art and music resources, Driving and Citizenship tests, Encyclopaedias, study and homework help, family and local history resources, legal and business resources, online courses, foreign language courses, newspapers and magazine access, and access to e-books and audio books.
- Reader Development Team developing and promoting library services to children, young people and adults, managing safeguarding across the service, and working with the branches to deliver our event programme.
- Housebound Service for people who are housebound either for a temporary period of time (i.e. coming out of hospital) or as an ongoing service for people who meet the criteria. This service is run in partnership with Barking and Dagenham.
- Schools Library Service delivering a programme of advisory visits to schools, providing primary school and secondary school support and training, and linking in with Reader Development literacy work.
- Local and Family History Centre providing access to local and family history collections, holding exhibitions and talks to the local community, and providing support for research. They are based in the new centre in Central Library.
- Stock Team managing the stock using a range of IT support systems, in order to provide the right stock at the right price at the right place. We also share a Stock Manager with London Borough of Enfield.

In addition, we are:

- Well underway in our programme of building refurbishments, with nine buildings already completed, and plans to develop two new libraries in Rainham and Harold Hill.
- Incorporating several partners in our buildings, including Children's Services in some of our branches
- Involved in partnerships with several visiting services, i.e. Age Concern, Arthritis Care, CAB, JobNet, Community Police events, local sports groups and support groups.
- Providing support to the Havering Museum.
- Running a very well supported volunteer programme.



# 3.2 Achievements since the last strategy

Just a few of our achievements in Libraries since our last strategy (2010-12) include:

- Opened new Library in Romford
- Opened new Library in Elm Park
- Restructured the Service to deliver MTFS savings without closing libraries or reducing opening hours
- Increased opening hours across branches, in excess of 100 hours per week, whilst simultaneously reducing budget costs
- Introduced our virtual library which includes a wide range of books and services
- Increased our range of targets events programme which have include some high profile authors including Jo Brand, Bill Turnbull, Mary Berry, Anne Widdecombe, Andy McNab etc
- Expanded our volunteering opportunities
- Introduced RFID in all branches
- Replaced the Peoples Network PC
- Increased the internet band width from 2mg to 10mg for each library
- Made free Wi-Fi available in all our branches
- Expanded our services to disability groups which include using Bag Books, Disability Forum, and Autism awareness
- Introduced Havering Libraries Television network
- Used Social Networking to target new audiences
- Expanded the London Libraries Consortium to 15 members
- Employed 8 staff with Learning Disabilities in partnership with the Rose Programme



The diagram below provides a useful illustration of the range of services provided by public libraries and the respective outcomes from this provision for the service, local authority and residents.



Logic Model Framework, Reading Agency and Chief Librarians

# **3.3 SWOT analysis**

From the data and feedback we receive, we consider our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to be:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul> <li>Location and condition of our buildings which enable them to be hubs of the community</li> <li>Providing an inclusive service</li> <li>We have 24/7 access to a large range of services including Reference, Training and educational support</li> <li>Support of our Council and in particular our Lead Member</li> <li>Strong leadership</li> <li>Well trained and committed workforce</li> <li>High customer satisfaction with our services</li> <li>Delivering an extensive, popular and well attended event programme (approx. 3,000 a year)</li> <li>Strong partnerships with internal services and external organisations using our buildings</li> <li>An innovative and forward thinking service</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Some of the income targets are challenging</li> <li>Parts of our collection are not readily available, in particular the Local and Family History archive</li> <li>Some staff need to improve their customer service skills</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul> <li>Use of new technologies to attract new borrowers and expand our reach in the community</li> <li>Our trained staff will improve the customer experience</li> <li>Improve marketing and promotion in a range of media formats to end the 'I did not know libraries did that' culture</li> <li>The role that the Library Service can play in relation to objectives in the Council's Customer Services Strategy, including use of library space to co-locate council services through the use of mini PASCs or IT</li> <li>How libraries respond to the 'Digital Age'</li> <li>How Libraries respond to the Literacy Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Requirements to make budget savings in an increasingly difficult economic climate</li> <li>Maintaining the relevance of libraries to the local community</li> </ul>

# 3.4 Responding to a changing community

Havering's Culture Strategy summarises the demographic changes facing the borough over the next few years, to which the Library Service, like all council services and partners, need to respond.

At the time of writing, there are approximately 240,000 people living in Havering, with population projections predicting a 5% increase by the end of this strategy (2015) and a 13% increase by 2021<sup>v</sup>. It is estimated that in the next five years, the population of South Hornchurch will grow the most, followed by Brooklands, Harold Wood and Romford Town.

#### • An ageing population

The 2011 census calculated the average age for residents in Havering as 40 – the highest average age in London and above the England average. 17.9% of residents were over 65 and 2.6% were over 85. The percentage of older people is due to increase significantly over the next few years. In 2011 there were 1,937 people over 90, by the end of this strategy (2015) there will be 2,496, and by 2021 there will be 3,297 (a 70% increase).

#### • Increasing children and young people

The 2011 census found 5.8% of Havering's population were under 5s – the lowest in London (though set to increase by 15% in 2015 and by 23% in 2021). The 5-9 bracket is currently about average for London, but is set to increase significantly over the next few years (from 13,307 in 2011 to 15,157 in 2015 and 18,424 in 2021 – a 38% increase).

An estimated 19% of children are thought to live in poverty in Havering, 27% live in lone-parent families, and approximately 400 families have been categorised as having multiple complex needs, with a further 2,000 families categorised as 'barely coping'.

#### • Ethnicity

The population of Havering is the least ethnically diverse in London, but it is becoming more diverse. The number of overseas nationals registering to work who live in Havering has increased by 41.5% over the last five years, with Nigerian, Polish and Indian nationals as the predominant groups. The highest ethnic diversity in Havering is amongst young people, with 23% of school pupils in 2011 coming from non-white ethnic backgrounds, primarily Black African descent. Some estimates predict the current percentage of BME residents could grow 21% by 2016 and 40% by 2021<sup>vi</sup>.

#### • Disability

Approximately 17.5% of working age residents in Havering are disabled<sup>vii</sup>, and approximately 49% of Havering residents aged 65 or older have a limiting long term illness<sup>viii</sup>. Of these 65+ residents with a limiting long term illness, 7,742 also live alone<sup>ix</sup>. The JSNA states that this number of disabled people in Havering may increase by 7% over the next ten years, while the number of adults with learning disabilities may increase by the same amount.

The Library Service is proactively planning for, and responding to, these changing demographics. A few examples are listed below:

- We have developed detailed community profiles for each of our branch libraries and we are actively using these to plan and deliver a wide range of inclusive services. We will continue to review these profiles and monitor attendance and feedback to ensure we are focusing services in the most appropriate way.
- We have this year identified that we have more females than males using our services and as a result we have planned a range of activities targeted at males.
- We recently established our disabilities forum day and will continue this annually to help us understand the needs of this group.
- Our Reader Development Team continues to visit community groups across the borough, promoting the service and feeding back any suggestions on how we can best engage with BME groups and groups that may be socially isolated or hard to reach.
- The Reader Development Team will also continue to work children and young people in the local community to promote reading and literacy, and this year we are developing a new literacy strategy which will help us focus our resources further over the next three years.
- We have provided resources to support access for people with sensory impairments, including retaining our large print and spoken word offer, providing a very successful listening group in Rainham, and purchasing technology to ensure we meet the RNIB 6 Steps programme.
- We continue to deliver our Housebound Library Service which provides a tailor made service to any Havering resident who is unable to get to the library, due to age, illness or disability and has no one who can visit on their behalf. Staff will visit them in their own homes once a month to provide them with all the services that are available through loan in the Library Service.
- Community Profiles indicate that Harold Hill Library users aged 15 19 make up only 5% of their active users, compared to 13% for users aged 10 14. The library will be exploring the possibility of a joint membership system with MyPlace and engaging in joint working to try to increase the usage of the 15 19 age group.
- We are always exploring new ways to get across the message about reading to all groups. Social networking is a growing way in which we can share the message, particularly with younger age groups. It is a way in which we can find new audiences, and remain relevant in today's technological world.
- Work has been ongoing to develop our digital offer and this is starting to attract new users (see graph). We have been investing in our virtual library and this has increased our virtual visitors, however this has not decreased our physical visitors which have continued to increase. This is largely due to our improved events and activities programmes.



# 3.5 An overview of national, regional and local policy

There are a large number of policies, strategies and priorities which are relevant to Public Libraries and the development of this strategy. The most significant influencers are listed below.

#### Culture, knowledge and understanding: great museums and libraries for everyone (ACE, 2011)

In October 2011 lead body responsibility for libraries and museums transferred from Museum, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to Arts Council England (ACE). To prepare for this transfer, Arts Council England asked Baroness Morris to provide an independent view on its strategic framework, 'Achieving Great Art for Everyone' and how ACE could adjust its vision for the arts in the next 10 years to embrace the museums and libraries sectors and serve its new wider sphere of influence.

The Goals for the Library Service, fit within this 10-year strategic framework, and are as follows:

- Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in museums and libraries
- Goal 2: More people experience and are inspired by museums and libraries
- Goal 3: Museums and libraries are sustainable, resilient and innovative
- Goal 4: The leadership and workforce are diverse and highly skilled
- Goal 5: Every child and young person has opportunity to experience the richness of museums and libraries

#### What Makes a Good Library Service (CILIP 2010)

In 2010, the Chartered Institute for Library and Information Professionals published guidance for local councils which described a good public library service as one which would deliver:

- A positive future for children and young people
- A fulfilling life for older people
- Strong, safe and sustainable communities
- Promotion of local identity and community pride
- Learning, skills, and workforce development
- Health improvements and wellbeing
- Equality, community cohesion and social justice
- Economic regeneration

A good library service will also offer a programme of activities and events that reflect the important role of the library in the local community. These may include:

- Activities for parents and toddlers, children and young people
- Events to encourage the experience of literature through author talks, reading groups, storytelling and promoting the joy of books through imaginative selection and presentation of stock

- Programmes to support family and community learning
- Promotion and support of the study of local history
- Programmes to develop information literacy, ICT proficiency, and skills for life

Libraries are important. A good library service provides a positive experience for local people and demonstrates the value a local authority places on its community. Libraries provide a popular and heavily-used service for everyone, allowing unbiased and unparalleled access to the world's knowledge. Libraries benefit everyone, whether they use their local library or not. They stand for intellectual freedom, democratic engagement, community cohesion, social justice and equality of opportunity.

#### The Modernisation Review of Public Libraries: A policy statement (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2011)

The review highlights 5 main challenges and 6 key aims for Libraries over the coming years.

Challenges:

- How can we reverse the current trend of decline in library usage and grow the numbers using the library service?
- How can the library service respond to limited public resource and economic pressures?
- How can all libraries respond to a 24/7 culture and to changing expectations of people who want immediate access to information?
- How can all libraries grasp the opportunities presented by digitisation?
- How can the library service demonstrate to citizens, commentators and politicians that they are still relevant and vital?

#### Aims:

- To drive the quality of all library services up to the level of the best
- To reverse the current trend of decline in library usage and grow the numbers using the library service
- That the library service is able to respond to limited public resource and economic pressures
- To ensure that all libraries respond to a 24/7 culture and to changing expectations of people who want immediate access to information
- That all libraries grasp the opportunities presented by digitisation
- To demonstrate to citizens, commentators and politicians that libraries are still relevant and vital

#### Future Libraries Programme and London Libraries Change Programme

Central government has stated a clear aspiration for greater collaboration in the provision of public services. The 2010 Future Libraries Programme has involved a rethink of how library services could be better delivered through a greater focus on shared services and new governance models, as well as through partnerships with community organisations and volunteers as part of the Big Society. Similarly, the 2011 London Libraries Change Programme has been exploring new delivery and governance models for libraries including a focus on collaborative services.

#### Envisioning the Library of the Future

Envisioning the Library of the Future is a programme of research and debate that will help to develop a long-term vision for public libraries in England, and builds on ACE's 'Culture, Knowledge and Understanding: Great Museums and Libraries for everyone'. The work is expected to be complete by the end of 2012, but some data has already been analysed and outlined below.

"Over the next ten years, the core purpose of libraries looks set to remain the same as it has done for many years: enabling people to access, explore and enjoy books and reading and other forms of knowledge, the provision of quality assured information, support for learning and literacy. The critical difference in the future will be the social, technological context in which libraries will be working, and what it means for *delivering* their core purpose."

Feedback from the first stages of consultation presented the following conclusions about the future of Libraries:

#### Funding, volunteers and partnership

- the justification for public funding of a core library offer remains strong
- there is likely to be a move towards a diversity of funding models
- the extent of volunteering in libraries will need to be a settlement between local councils and communities
- community involvement in libraries will become an organising principle focused on collaboration and engagement, rather than a way of staving off closure

### Digital society, e-books, children and literacy

- there is a growing risk of a real digital divide in society
- libraries are key to enable access and assistance to all in the use of digital technologies
- barriers to e-book lending from public libraries has to be addressed
- libraries are essential to the learning, reading literacy, information literacy and cultural development of people of all ages

### Communicating the brand, national consistency, new audiences and users

- what libraries offer is much more than books and reading, but too few people know this
- libraries of the future must achieve a step-change in how they communicate their offer
- usage is rising where libraries are communicating with, and becoming closely attuned to, their local communities
- there is a tension between national consistency and local distinctiveness

### Social purpose, making the political case, public space and rural communities

- discussion tends to focus on what libraries must do in the future; stakeholders find it harder to articulate why they should do it
- there are concerns that the powerful core concepts about the purpose and ethos of the service are not well-rehearsed outside the sector
- libraries provide a gateway for some people to a digital public space

Skills, leadership and innovation

- libraries will need information professionals, but also educators, community mobilisers and managers of volunteers. These skills exist in libraries but are too often in short supply
- a leadership challenge for the libraries sector is the need to articulate big shared ideas about core purpose while simultaneously offering services appropriate to individual communities
- a related challenge is the ability to adapt and innovate quickly, e.g. in provision of new services or developing varied funding streams
- the training provided by library schools is not always relevant to careers in public libraries

# Public library activity in the areas of health and well-being, MLA and LISU, 2010

Research commissioned by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) in 2010 concluded that public libraries make a significant contribution to health and well-being in communities, but that this wasn't as well recognised or articulated as it could be. Key findings were:

- There is a wide range of health and well-being activity in public libraries, some of it carried out in partnership with health and social care.
- Evidence suggests that it is the *diversity* of the health and well-being activities library offer that is particularly important. So someone might initially come into the library to find out specific information about a particular health concern but then find support from other activities the library is running, such as reading groups, leisure activities and social care support.
- Health and care partners value the fact that libraries offer people a neutral, non-stigmatised, non-clinical community space and can help them reach people are difficult for health care partners to contact.
- Libraries are valuable because they assist people to access online services, including NHS choices website.

However...

- The potential for libraries to work in partnership with health and social care particularly around creative community activities such as reading groups is underdeveloped.
- There needs to be more and better evidence that demonstrates the impact of libraries and health partners working together to support future partnership development.
- Libraries need to build the business case which demonstrates how effective they are at delivering services that meet strategic partners' priorities including running early intervention and preventative services, providing positive outcomes for patient and saving costs.
- Among the recommendations made by the research is that libraries develop a core offer, or set of activities, services and initiatives around health and well-being.
- Libraries' inability to articulate their contribution to the health and well-being agenda is reinforced by their relative invisibility in high level health, well-being and social care policy and strategy. Where libraries do feature, it tends to be at the action planning level. Health and well-being should, however, be high on the public library agenda.

# **Objective 1: Health and Wellbeing**

Objective / Tasks	Base line position 2012	Target 2015	Culture Strategy Principle
Maintain and improve Health and Well being corners in all libraries	5 in place	A further 5 to be delivered based on feed back from the first 5	2,3,4
Improve the Books on Prescription stock and promote to a wider audience	Stock currently at some branches but not well publicised	Add stock to the Health Corners in libraries	4
Run a wide range of events around food, exercise and healthy living	Each of our monthly themes will include one of these key areas	Each of our monthly themes will include one of these key areas and we will increase attendance by 5%	2,3,4
Continue to promote joining the library from birth to encourage reading and rhyme for children and investigate option for re engaging at Reception Age	All children born in the borough to automatically have a library card	All children followed up at Reception age to ensure they know how to use the library	3
Continue to reach out to community groups and schools promoting the value of reading and learning	All children born in the borough currently get a library card when registered	Review of this services and work to ensure all reception children have a library card	1,3
Achieve RNIB 6 steps	Not compliant with all 6 steps yet	All branches complaint	3
Plan and deliver on opportunities linked to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games	Sporting Memories project held. Digital exhibition commenced. Scrapbooking project due to start.	Display community information and photographical evidence of events linked to the Olympics in Havering. Record Sporting Memories project for future generations which will form part of the Local and Family History Archive Project.	1
Work with the Health & Wellbeing Board to explore new ways for public libraries to contribute to the Borough's Health & Wellbeing priorities.	A number of existing initiatives are already underway or being established, including Healthy Living Corners in all libraries.	Implement new initiatives in libraries, in partnership with other services, which contribute to the health & wellbeing priorities.	1,2,3,4
Deliver the Literacy Strategy to improve opportunities for people in the borough	No strategy exists at present. We are working with the National Literacy Trust to complete this.	Strategy agreed and work will be on going to deliver the action plan.	1,2,3,4

# **Objective 2: Learning and Personal Development**

Objective / Tasks	Base line position 2012	Target 2015	Culture Strategy Principle
Engage with other partners and stakeholders to manage learning opportunities for the residents of Havering	Havering College no longer wish to use the library to run regular courses. Work is on going regarding the rationalising of adult learning opportunities	Clear guidance on which service is providing which opportunities and identifying new partners to use the meeting space	2,3
Build on our Volunteer Strategy	Strategy in draft	Strategy implemented	1
Digitise the Local and Family History collections using volunteers, to create learning opportunities for the volunteer groups and the local community	Nothing digitised at present	20% of collection digitised	1,4
On going training for staff to promote our on line reference resources to help customers get the most from the wide range of resources	No training on online services yet completed	All staff trained	4
Purchase new book stock to meet demand. Use Evidence Based Stock Management tools to deliver good quality stock	4,000 items moved this year saving £12,500	Increase this by 5%	4
Promote basic IT Skills training and run courses with our partners	Currently courses are run in Hornchurch and Upminster	Library to look at opportunities for running self help courses via on line resources to support partners	2,4
Increased take up of children starting and finishing the Summer Reading Scheme	4,196 children took part in the challenge. With 2,830 children finishing. This is a 51% increase since 2002	We aim to increase this by 2%	1,2,3,4
Promote our new on line courses including on line languages to improve mental health and support learning	Launched in July 2012	Hits on the new service to increase to 10,000	3
Review of how the School Library Service model and work with schools to ensure it provide a service that is required	Advisory Service only	New model agreed	2,4

# **Objective 3: Towns and Communities**

Objective / Tasks	Base line position 2012	Target 2015	Culture Strategy Principle
Increase satisfaction with Libraries	81.5 % satisfaction	83.5 % satisfaction	4
Use Community Profiles to increase library membership, including a focus on increasing membership in our most deprived areas of the borough	69% of the population currently has a library card (add target re. membership in areas of deprivation)	75% of population to have a card (add target re. membership in areas of deprivation)	1,2,3,4
Achieve Libraries Customer Service Excellence Accreditation	Charter Mark achieved but criteria now changes to Customer Services Excellence	Achieve Customer Services Excellence	4
Deliver a new Library at Rainham	Building works have started	New library opened	1,2,3,4
Deliver a new library at Harold Hill	Feasibility works being undertaken	New library opened	1,2,3,4
Continue to hold the annual Libraries Forum	2 held to date	Continue to run annually	1,2,3,4
Continue to support the annual Culture & Leisure Disability Forum	Library presence and presentations given at forum	Continue to actively support	1,2,3,4
Provide more volunteer opportunities for residents of Havering	We currently have volunteers for the Summer Reading Scheme, Reading Buddies, IT support, Housebound, Local History support	We are looking to recruit volunteers to help and / or run events in our branches.	1
Continue to offer a wide range of reading materials	We currently purchase a wide range of reading materials including physical books, spoken	Use of retail data to inform purchasing.	4
	word, e-books and audio books.	Add e-magazines to collection.	
	As part of the LLC we have access to over 6 million items of stock which include over a 100 different languages.	Use of Evidence Based Stock Management to ensure quality and content are within agreed tolerances.	
		Work with User Groups to ensure we are providing the right materials.	
	We will monitor the quality and range of our stock in order to	Seek to grow LLC to provide more	

	promote a range of genres.	opportunities for Havering residents.	
Review the role of user groups across all branch libraries	User groups operating in many branch libraries with differing roles and level of engagement	All groups have discussed how they would like to run and how they can assist us to achieve the objectives set out in our strategy. Roles / Terms of Reference for all groups agreed.	1,4
Use Social Networking to reach a wider audiences and raise awareness of what libraries have to offer	18 – 64 age group currently 9% of population use the library	20% activity in this age group	1,2,4
Use e-marketing to attract new users	18 – 64 age group currently 9% of population use the library	20% activity in this age group	3,4
Use feedback from events and activities to inform future planning	Collected individually at branches	Summarise quarterly for the whole to identify trends	1
Support the integration of Youth Services within Culture and Leisure	Youth Facilitation Team in the process of transfer. Restructure to be fully implemented in Feb 2013.	Set up mini library and shared membership card in Myplace. Deliver events and activities in partnership with Youth Service staff and customers. Run courses on new online services from Myplace. Continue to evaluate opportunities for joint working across both services.	1,2,3,4

i National Literacy Trust (2011) Local authorities improving life chances

ii Department for Education (Apr 2011) A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the causes of disadvantage and transforming families' lives

iii Dame Tickell, C & Department for Education (Mar 2011) The Early Years: Foundations for life, health & learning

iv DCMS (2009) Capturing the Impact of Libraries, Final Report, p22

v Interim 2011-based Subnational Population Projections

vi Projected Ethnicity Growth in Havering, London & Outer London Boroughs 2011-2021. Round Population Group Projections, Greater London Authority, 2010 (14).

vii Working Age People with Disabilities, Annual Population Survey: Department for Work and Pensions, (2012).

viii Limiting Long Term Illness in Havering, Census: Office of National Statistics, (2001).

ix Residents Aged 65+, Living Alone with LTLI, POPPI, (2012). Available online at www.poppi.org.uk